

Attack on Titan: Crack in the Wall

by Duke Statian

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Summary: Still bitter towards Levi for the loss of his arm, Morgan is suddenly reassigned from the front lines in Karanese and sent to protect the cowardly and pompous Lord Balto before he can confront the captain again. His future suddenly changes when an assassin strikes for the heart of man's greed. Reality is harsh, especially when humanity's strongest soldier made it that way.

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Still bitter towards Levi for the loss of his arm, Morgan is suddenly reassigned from the front lines in Karanese and sent to protect the cowardly and pompous Lord Balto before he can confront the captain again. His future suddenly changes when an assassin strikes for the heart of man's greed. Reality is harsh, especially when humanity's strongest soldier made it that way.

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><p>Attack on Titan: Crack in the Wall

******-The year is 0850. Current location of main story: The Battle of Utgard Castle, just after Anime season One.******

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><p>"My name is Lieutenant Morgan St Clare, I am a soldier of Humanity. Five years ago, when I was seventeen, I was a guardsman for a rich noble known as Baron Mason, before that I was part of the Wall Garrison. When Wall Maria fell, I, along with everyone else, lost my old life. I spent those years searching for the Baron's daughter, only to find that she had joined the military. When I was not searching for her, I was assisting the Survey Corps in their expeditions however my bad encounters with that prick, Captain Levi,

soon led me to return to the Wall Garrison. Anyway, many things happened before now, but I haven't the time to tell you that story. From now on only the future..."<p>

"Oi, soldier boy! Stop talking to yourself and get ready for your morning patrol!" A high pitched female voice called out from behind Morgan's bedroom door. She thumped hard on the wall three times then he could hear the maid's footsteps fade away, down the second floor hallway of the castle.

"Well, this is day one here at Lord Balto's castle within Wall Rose, how bad can it really be?" Morgan continued to talk to himself in the full-length mirror at the end of the grand bedroom. "Oh god, I'm going delusional already. I never talk to myself". He shook his head then noticed that part of his fringe was out of place so he corrected it then checked himself over, then, when he was satisfied, he turned to the gleaming suit of armor that stood in the corner. Morgan was a very skilled engineer, although sometimes he needed help from Hange.

The HTSA MKII, the Horizontal Titan Slaying Armor Mark Two was a unique alternative to the common 3DMG of normal soldiers. It was designed by his old employer, Baron Mason, to protect his estate in Wall Maria from titans for it was situated on flat ground where 3DMG could not operate. The sallet helm had a rich crimson plume adorning its top and an equally rich crimson cape draped over the suit's shoulders.

A mighty hammer was also propped up in the corner, his trusty weapon. It was a large medieval war-hammer which had been specially modified to include gas triggers for the armor's jump assist function located at its ankles. Small explosive disks called blasting caps were used to actually slay a titan, not the hammer itself. They were originally made from gunpowder but since the creation of the MKII, they were replaced with extremely expensive but far more powerful nitroglycerin explosives. A blasting cap would be fastened to the hammerhead by clips and when it struck a target, the small directed explosive would detonate and blow the limbs off even 15m class titans. Of course Morgan was human and he could not fly like the other soldiers, while it made him harder to eat, the armor was slow and so was susceptible to titan attacks however fast. It would be almost useless compared to that super human boy, Eren Jaeger, if he were to transform and attack Morgan, after all, he lifted a thousand ton boulder by himself, what would steel do to protect him? Other titans were slow and dumb so they weren't as big a threat as a titan shifter.

One small grappling hook like that of the 3DMG was attached to the armor's left arm which could be used to scale buildings, albeit slowly. In order to not get horribly killed while out in the open, which almost happened many times already, he came equipped with a strong horse called Areion to carry him into battle. The last time he was left without a horse in titan territory, he was quickly surrounded by titans. His best friend, Wilhelm Adler, was killed beside him, his armor was torn to bits and his lower left arm bitten off. He felled many titans on foot but he nearly succumbed to defeat if it wasn't for the timely arrival of the Baron's daughter, Quinn Mason.

Morgan placed his right hand against the badge of the Wall Garrison that adorned its chest where the heart would be and he sighed; he had

a tough history, although he learned after getting to know Captain Levi better, that the diminutive man had it even worse than he did. They had been constantly at each others throats when Morgan had been assisting the Survey Corps, so much so that they actually fought, albeit without lethal weapons. Morgan however, lost. He still blamed Levi for the loss of his lower arm during the 57th Expedition due to an order that Morgan strongly rejected, dumping the corpses of the fallen.

He turned away from the armor and walked to the dresser where his prosthetic arm lay. Hange Zoe had designed it for him and he had built it after the loss of his arm not too long ago. It was gas powered and so connected to the armor's gas canister that was situated on its back, without it, the arm could not operate, not that it was a particularly good replacement for a real lower arm but it was the best they could do. It literally took a few seconds for it to actually pick something up and he had to activate a trigger on the hammer to do so, but it was exceptionally strong, being made from steel and all. He could not however wear it without his armor on so he was one arm short when it came to everyday activities, just his luck and Lord Balto would get him to clean the castle or something.

Morgan picked up the metal lower arm then, by biting a leather strap with his teeth, secured it to his left arm and did up the buckles that secured it. Its two pincer like digits hung there loosely without the force of the gas operated pistons to contract them. The next step was to put on the armor without any help.

"Why me?" Morgan sighed then began to put his knightly armor on.

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><p>"You're an hour late for patrol!" The young maid exclaimed. Morgan thought her name was something like Anne or Amelia, he had forgotten already. She was perhaps his age, twenty one or twenty two years old and she wore a simple maid's outfit and had long dark brown hair tied up in a loose bun.<p>

"I'm sorry, but it's difficult putting on a suit of armor with a fake arm", Morgan replied as he clomped out of his room and into the hallway covered head to toe in battle plate. His voice echoed with a metallic tang from beneath the sallet helm's visor.

"Then get up at five instead of six!" She huffed then turned and began to walk away. "Your first patrol will now end at ten. After that, Lord Balto wants you to stand guard over a poker game with his business partners".

"Yes, ma'am", Morgan replied despite the fact that she was a mere maid and not someone with any real authority over him, unless Balto said so. He turned down the opposite side of the hallway towards the grand staircase of the castle. "I wonder what Hange's up to?" He mumbled to himself, he wasn't very happy with suddenly being yanked from the frontlines and sent to be the personal guard of an obese gentry-man, however the King had ordered it for Balto was a coward and had pressured him into getting Darius Zackly to send one of humanities' strongest soldiers to protect him. After Wilhelm Adler was killed, Morgan became humanity's 20th strongest soldier, just behind a man named Samson Mordecai although his skill and speed had

actually decreased thanks to the loss of his lower left arm, he had almost been honorably discharged from duty because of it but his incredible resilience made up for his loss in skill. He was nigh un-killable, well, to another human perhaps, titans were a different matter. The Asian girl, Mikasa, he recalled, was ranked in 3rd place behind Levi and Mike, and she was only fifteen years old.

The sky was pale blue today with a few clouds out over the countryside, Morgan could see it out of the windows as he walked by. Birds flew past, up and over the castle walls then disappeared from sight. "You're the new guy, huh?" A man's voice called out from Morgan's left as he descended the grand staircase. He turned his head to see who had addressed him. He stopped halfway down the steps and observed the man, tall and shaven, he carried a sword in its scabbard and leather armor covered his body, an estate guard.

"Yes, my name is Morgan St Clare. I'm here to..."

"I know why you're here, to steal our jobs", the man scorned then folded his arms. Morgan climbed down the rest of the steps then his metal boots clacked on the marble floor of the lobby.

"I had no say in the matter", Morgan replied then opened the visor of his helmet. His brown fringe could just be seen under the metal and his cold stone grey eyes examined the audacious man before him.

The man approached, he was far taller than Morgan, even in his armor he was only 5'10", minus the plume. The guard looked the armor up and down then scoffed. "Rich prick", he said then turned and walked away towards the great hall.

"Charming man", Morgan said then lowered his visor again and proceeded to the main doors of the castle. "To think, this is pretty much what I was doing five years ago, before the wall fell", he reminisced.

"Ah, soldier boy!" A merry voice called out behind him as Morgan reached for the door handle. He turned around to see the gluttonous form of Lord Balto grinning at him.

"Good morning, sir", Morgan bowed slightly then removed his helmet for the lord. "May I be of service to you?"

"No-no, just passing through. On your way to the stables, yes?" Balto asked. He may have been a fat and selfish coward, but he wasn't exactly a horrible man, even if he placed himself and his property above others.

"Yes, sir. My apologies for being late, my armor is difficult to put on for I'm missing a fully functional hand", Morgan said and raised his left hand, the metal prosthesis blended in with the suit of armor to not be immediately apparent.

"No worries, my boy. Just try not to let it happen again. Now on your way", Lord Balto said and stroked his mustache. Morgan bowed again then replaced his helmet and opened the door. The warm breeze wafted in and he found it incredibly calming, someone was cutting the grass outside. He stepped out and then turned off towards the stables to get his horse.

* * *

><p>Areion was a massive horse, specially bred for pulling carts but repurposed by Morgan to carry a man in forty five kilograms of armor, for war horses no longer existed, well, since his last horse died in conflict. The Survey Corps horses were too small and swift to carry what was essentially a knight into battle so he looked elsewhere for a steed.<p>

Morgan took the reigns of his horse then mounted Areion. He whipped the reigns and trotted off for the first patrol of his new, grudgingly complied with, job. He left the courtyard and castle behind him then began the route around the estate, like he did five years ago albeit for another estate and another nobleman. He trotted onto the avenue that led to the castle just as a horse drawn wagon came rolling by, no doubt filled with valuable goods. Morgan nodded to the merchants and they returned it. He then left the avenue, over the moat bridge and onto the grass that surrounded the estate, he would circle it a few times then go out further for a standardized 'Titan Watch'. While Lord Balto's fear of titans and destruction of his property was not unfounded, Morgan had complete faith in the Survey Corps to stop the sudden breach that had occurred in the southern area of Wall Rose. All he knew was that they were currently engaged in combat at Utgard Castle, at least that's what he was told before he left Karanese for Balto's estate in the midlands of Wall Rose, which was yesterday so he hoped everyone had survived the night. He was not too far away so if he was needed, he could respond in time.

Get me out of here.

After almost three hours of patrolling the estate, enough to turn even an experienced estate guard insane, Morgan returned Areion to the stables. The horse trotted in and he replaced the gate bar and catch. Areion whinnied and Morgan smiled but left him behind to see to Lord Balto's poker game. First, he stopped by the kitchens to get some breakfast but was disappointed to find that breakfast ended at nine O'clock for they had to prepare for the game event's catering. He settled for bread and water instead. Afterwards, Morgan entered the great hall as the estate workers prepared the table, chairs and other furniture for the noblemen who were to arrive in the next half an hour. He checked his regal crimson cape to ensure that it was spotless for he had to give a good impression to the gentry and to make Lord Balto seem even more impressive.

Such was his job now. Not too dissimilar from a manservant in some respects he thought.

The morning sun shone through the stained glass windows and illuminated the great hall, where, as Morgan was told, Commander Pixis and Lord Balto would play chess regularly. He approached the workers to see if they needed any help.

"Do you need any assistance?" Morgan asked them. Since he had arrived yesterday, Morgan had found his vocabulary becoming even more and more formal, just as he used to speak before his association with the Survey Corps and in particular, the foul mouthed Captain Levi. Bad language had crept up on him quicker than anticipated and soon became a regular part of his vocabulary, that was until he returned to his old job as a highly trained estate guard where the utmost respect had

to be given.

"We're alright, thanks", a man said as he and another man hauled the last of the carved mahogany chairs into place. He seemed a bit distant and detached from reality and didn't even make eye contact, even though he couldn't see Morgan's eyes behind the visor slit of his helmet.

Morgan nodded then wondered about what he was supposed to do as Baron Mason never played poker and rarely held events in the six months he spent at his estate. He decided that he would simply be on guard duty and took up position beside the great doors to the hall. He stood up straight and remained motionless as a guard of his caliber was supposed to. The estate guard from earlier, the one who Morgan thought was out to get him, walked in. Morgan assumed that he was also on duty as well for the event. He saw Morgan but didn't say anything and continued walking, only then did Morgan realize that the gentry had arrived and that the guard had been leading them in through the doors that Morgan stood beside.

"Welcome to my humble estate", Lord Balto announced with spread arms. The five guests walked in, all equally regal and posh. They passed by Morgan without noticing that he was stationed by the door and he barely looked at them from beneath his helm, he merely stared dead ahead, after all, he had no business with any of them, he was simply there to protect them against titans, but he figured that they were more likely to get burgled at the moment than assaulted by giants, both of which he could handle.

"My-my, what a place to be!" One of the posh twats said and stroked his neatly trimmed beard. Lord Balto gestured to the poker table for them to take a seat and they complied. The guard turned and bowed to them then left the room in an orderly manner. Morgan felt special at the fact he was the only guard required to defend this place, after all, the others would do jack all against titans.

The butler walked in in formal black attire, he would be the dealer no doubt. "Good morning, milords", he said and bowed. The gentry acknowledged him then the butler opened a dark wooden box which housed the poker game itself. He split the cards and placed chips around in piles for the men.

"Good lord, Balto! You have a knight?" One of the other lords exclaimed. "I thought it was just a suit of armor". Morgan heard them but did not turn his head however he felt them watching in the corner of his eye, one of the lords in particular watched him keenly.

"Yes-yes, my newest estate guard! Fully trained and a seasoned veteran of titan warfare, I was told that he has slain over twenty titans, some without using a horse no less", Lord Balto explained from the head of the table in delight. "He is the best man for the job of protecting the estate and of course, you fine gentlemen".

The noble that had been watching Morgan finally spoke up. "That wouldn't by any chance be Lieutenant Morgan St Clare, would it? I recognize the armor". Morgan resisted the urge to turn his head for he knew the man who had spoken, Baron Mason himself, which was quite surprising due to the fact he never played poker. "You are quite right, Lord Balto. This man saved my daughter's life on multiple

occasions, you can trust him with your life".

Morgan grinned under his helmet but remained motionless, he was glad that his former employer was here. Lord Balto beamed with rosy cheeks then nodded to Morgan. The butler then cleared his throat to get the gentry's attention so that they could begin.

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><p>A while passed and the men were still at their game, Lord Balto was happy for he had won a fair bit of cash for himself but the man in the lead was Count McKenzie, they were all chatting and it seemed to have been a success. The chef arrived with a trolley of canapes and sugar candies for the lords and presented it to them while they took a break from their game. In the corner of his eye, Morgan spotted something move outside the large window in the distance, upon the roof of the building opposite the great hall. He blinked twice to clear his vision then noticed that the shadow of that building's chimney was different, almost as if it was blended with another shadow. Curious, Morgan tapped his pauldron with his gauntlet clad hand to get Lord Balto's attention, the fat man looked up from his plate of snacks. Morgan gave a slight hand signal by tapping his chest then pointing to where he had seen the oddity, it took the lord a moment to figure it out but he nodded in answer. Morgan moved from his position and left the great hall after gaining permission.<p>

"Where is the knight off to, Balto?" Count McKenzie asked as he bit into a sugar candy.

"Oh, just to attend to something briefly. He'll be back soon", Balto replied then returned to his plate.

Morgan stepped outside and into the courtyard then scanned the rooftops for the thing he saw but nothing was there, the chimney pot was simply crooked so he returned to his post inside the great hall.

After the poker game, the chef announced that lunch was to be served at the table, to which the lords readily acknowledged. As they were dishing up, Lord Balto stood up with a bit of effort then waddled to Morgan from across the hall. "What did you see, lad?" He asked.

"It was nothing, sir. Perhaps a bird flew over the estate and cast an odd shadow that I mistook for something else. There's nothing to worry about, I assure you", Morgan replied in a very formal tone from beneath his helm.

"Very good", Balto said with a nod then eagerly returned to the table for the coveted roast beef that the merchants had delivered that morning. Thanks to the titan attack of 0845, meat was becoming exceedingly rare, even inside Wall Sina.

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><p>It was now the early evening and Morgan had been given an hour's break from guard duty between the start of the poker game and evening refreshments that had just concluded. During his break, Morgan had returned to his room to rest but was intercepted by the young snippy maid who yelled at him again for being late to his morning patrol.

Morgan apologized again just to get her off his back.<p>

Morgan stood by the main doors in the polished marble lobby to see the gentry out. Count McKenzie excused himself a moment earlier for he was in a rush but the others stayed behind for a few more minutes and were chatting in the lobby before the staircase. Morgan hoped that they would hurry up although he would have liked to talk to Baron Mason before he departed.

"Thank you for coming", Lord Balto concluded and shook each of the noble's hands in turn. "I hope you all had a..."

He was suddenly cut off as a bloodcurdling scream cut through the evening air, throwing the lords into disarray. "What was that?" Baron Mason asked urgently as he drew his rapier.

"My god, that sounded like Count McKenzie!" Lord Balto quivered and backed away slightly then saw Morgan by the door. "Quick, go and investigate!"

Morgan nodded and drew his mighty war-hammer then passed through the doors and into the cool breeze with Baron Mason close behind wielding his own weapon. He looked around then saw down at the end of the avenue a figure standing over the body of the Count, his horse had panicked and ran off. The assailant looked up at the Lieutenant and the Baron then under torchlight a curved beak like mouth could be seen. Morgan spent no time thinking, he leaped forwards on a blast of gas propelled from his boots and broke into a sprint after the attacker. As he closed the distance and under the dim light, he could see that the figure wore 3DMG around their hips. They drew up a pair of sickle shaped swords and spun them with incredible speed then pointed past Morgan, Baron Mason and Lord Balto to one of the other lords that were hiding behind the doors of the castle and peeping through.

"You're next", she said in an ominous tone. It was a she without doubt. Her blood slick blades dripped on the stone bricks and splattered gently. She sheathed a blade and pulled out a gunpowder pistol then aimed it casually at Morgan, he didn't halt his charge instead he sped up. The assassin pulled the trigger and the gun cracked like a whip, the projectile flew through the air but unfortunately pinged off of the steel armor with little to no effect. She smirked then replaced it to its holster, its only purpose was to test the armor's strength.

Morgan reached the assassin then sent a bone shattering swing of his hammer towards her, hoping to catch both of her swords and snap them in unison, he only used the explosives on titans otherwise it would be overkill. However, the assassin leaped back on a burst of gas then fired a cable into the nearby building, a pair of great falcon wings spread from her back and she flew off suddenly. Morgan cursed then tried to pursue but realized that he couldn't catch a person on 3DMG, especially if she was now fleeing the scene of the crime. Morgan looked around as Baron Mason jogged up with his rapier still raised. He checked the body of Count McKenzie and saw that he had very nearly been decapitated by the assassin's hooked blades. He then noticed that on the Count's chest, an insignia had been painted in his blood with the point of a sword, it looked like a falcon skull in a circle. Instinctively, Morgan took out his notebook that was in a leather pouch on the back of his belt and sketched the icon quickly just as

Lord Balto trotted up, he was sweating profusely.

"W-what the hell has happened!?" Balto huffed then put his chubby hands on his knees for support.

"It would seem that our dear friend has been assassinated", Baron Mason regretfully announced as the other lords approached.

Morgan knelt down after replacing the notebook to his belt pouch. "Nothing is missing, sir. He wasn't mugged".

"What do we do!?" Lord Balto panicked in despair for a man had nearly been decapitated on his glorious property, forever scarring it.

"Milord, I advise you to call your other guards and have them search the premises. I want you to go to your study and remain there until we've cleared the area, take a guard with you as well", Morgan said then stood back up from the body. "Send a messenger to Stohess to inform the Military Police of an assassination on a member of the nobility".

Lord Balto hesitated but nodded then hurried off back to the castle. "Oh, if only he had stayed with us, he'd have escaped this terrible fate", one of the lords, Goldsmith, said. He was the one that the assassin had addressed specifically.

"It is regrettable, if he had not gone ahead I would have been able to escort him out", Morgan said to the lords. Baron Mason returned his rapier to its sheath then paced around the avenue in thought. Out of all the noblemen present, only Mason was capable of handling himself in a fight, probably because he was the youngest at forty six years old and the others put too much faith in their servant's abilities.

"That thing you scribbled down, the falcon skull, what do you make of it?" Baron Mason asked then stopped pacing. His greying hair and short beard shone silver in the low torchlight.

"I don't know, sir. I would send it to Hange Zoe for analysis but she's otherwise engaged. I will show it to the MP when they arrive", Morgan replied then looked at the body of Count McKenzie again. "Maybe a calling card or logo of some kind? A crime syndicate perhaps?"

"There's no such crime syndicate around here with an assassin like the one we saw. Those kind of people can only be found in the inner walls and the capital", Lord Goldsmith explained. "The assailant had that Three Dimensional Maneuvering Gear and false wings to appear like they could fly, a terror tactic no doubt".

Morgan acknowledged the statement. "Milord, she seemed to point to you and say that you were next. I fear she will try to assassinate you too".

"What? Why?" Goldsmith reacted in shock and dismay.

"I don't know, sir. When the MP arrive we can sort things out, but for now I want you all to go back to the castle, you'll be safe inside", Morgan said. The lords, except Baron Mason, nodded in

agreement and returned to the castle. "Sir, it's not safe out here", Morgan said to the baron.

"I will be fine. I intend to help you hunt this assassin down as you've helped my family numerous times. It's only what I owe you", Baron Mason replied then readjusted his collar.

"I don't know if I will be the one doing the hunting, that's the MP's job. I need to protect this estate, that's my job, sir".

"It is your job, Morgan. This place came under attack, a Count was nearly beheaded and is now dead in front of us, if that doesn't give you reason to hunt this person down to ensure that no such attacks can happen again then I don't know what will".

Morgan raised the visor on his helmet. "I understand, sir. I will look into it".

"You have access to my resources and I can convince the Military Police to let you onboard for this one as well".

"I'm not keen on working with the Military Police, there's far too much corruption there", Morgan replied.

"You'll need their help if we're to catch whoever did this. I can already tell this won't be like that slaver gang you destroyed five years ago, these are serious people with serious political goals", Baron Mason explained.

"How do you know, sir?" Morgan asked as he reminisced, there were perhaps a dozen skeletons left in the slaver's cave hideout for he had collapsed the entrance with an explosive, he buried one man alive. Damn I can be cruel.

"It's obvious. A high ranking politician is murdered as he left a meeting with other lords to discuss the increased security on merchant caravans and further recruitment and resources for the Military Police, we were going to put this forward to the King. A crime syndicate would naturally be opposed to this and so have sent a highly skilled assassin to stop us. The question is, how did they find out about the poker game?"

"A natural guess would be to suspect one of the workers here. I can tell this is going to be difficult, even though there's no titans this time", Morgan said then looked up as some of the estate guards approached in a hurry.

"That soldier, Levi Ackerman, I was told that he used to live in the under city of the capital before the Survey Corps found him. Do you think he might be able to help? Even if it's just pointing us in the right direction, after all, he may have had contact with this crime syndicate at some point", Baron Mason suggested.

"I doubt it, he along with Hange Zoe are currently handling the situation in the south", Morgan replied then stepped back to allow the other guards room to examine the body. "Plus I wouldn't go to Levi unless it was urgent. Though, while we despise one another, we will work together if we have to".

The guards called over a stretcher and the young maid who's name

began with the letter A brought it from the nurse's office which was situated in the corner of the estate grounds. "What's your name, young lady?" Baron Mason asked and watched the guards haul the body up and onto the stretcher.

"My name is Cynthia Clark, milord", she replied. She looked at the body and the blood that had drenched the ground but did not flinch, in fact her complexion didn't even change, like it was a regular thing for a house maid to witness gory deaths.

"Damnit", Morgan cursed under his breath. Her name didn't begin with the letter A after all.

"I don't think it's appropriate for a young lady such as yourself to be witness to this crime, thank you for your assistance but I think it's best if you return to the castle", Baron Mason said and the maid simply bowed and walked away without another word. Morgan watched her go with a frown upon his face.

"What's up with her?" Morgan asked openly. The guards took the body away, to somewhere like the nurse's office no doubt. It would take the Military Police a few hours to arrive now that the messenger was fast approaching on horseback from the stables. Morgan and the Baron parted to allow the galloping horse and its rider to travel down the estate's avenue. The messenger charged out of the gates, onto the bridge and into the rapidly approaching night.

* * *

><p>A knock at the door and Lord Balto jumped in fright, he had been standing by the floor to ceiling windows of his study and peering out into the inky blackness. The clock on the wall ticked repetitively and it was beginning to become ingrained in his mind for he was trying to perish the thought of Count McKenzie's death but the sudden knock had snapped him out of the trance.<p>

"C-come in", he said nervously and the door creaked open. "Good grief, boy, I nearly had a heart attack!"

"My apologies, sir. I wanted to inform you that the Military Police will arrive soon. I secured the area and the Count has been transferred to the nurse's office", Morgan said and stepped inside the study with his visor still down and a plate and a glass in his hands, or hand and claw like prosthesis. "I brought you a sandwich and a glass of whisky, sir".

Lord Balto's breathing slowed down and he became relaxed once again. "Oh-uh, thank you".

Morgan nodded in response then crossed the room and placed the refreshments on the desk for him. He then stood up straight with his arms by his sides. "Baron Mason insists that I look into this issue along with the Military Police, do I have your permission, milord?"

Lord Balto eyed the sandwich and whisky upon his desk then snapped his attention back to the armored man before him. "I-I still need you to guard my estate, after all, those titans are still a threat".

"Permission to speak freely, sir?" Morgan asked in a very formal tone.

"Permission granted", Lord Balto replied then sat down at his desk. His chair creaked under his immense weight as he picked up the sandwich.

"A man has died, sir, a member of the nobility no less. The assassin committed this act under my watch, while it would have been impossible for me to prevent the killing as it was outside while I stood guard before you, it was nonetheless under my watch and so I take responsibility for it", Morgan explained, trying his best to convince the fat-cat.

"Don't be silly, boy. You couldn't have stopped him, you're only human! You couldn't be in two places at once", Lord Balto protested but stopped as he took a bite of the sandwich.

"Sir, with respect, when a Corporal's squad is slain in action and he is the sole survivor, he takes responsibility for it. As a Lieutenant, if my platoon is slain to the man, it's me who answers to the Commander. If one man is slain under my watch as your guard, I am to blame regardless of the circumstances. It is my duty, as your guard and as a soldier of Humanity to protect you and to ensure that this never happens again, therefore I beg your reconsideration. She must be stopped and brought to justice by my hand, for dishonor can be washed away with success".

Lord Balto looked visibly stunned by the small speech, he hadn't expected it from someone in the military, he thought that they were all meat-heads who got paid to die for rich people like him. That's who he was, he was a coward, he would put his life before others for he saw himself as better than them, but this was not completely true. He let out a deep sigh and he put his stubby fingers to the bridge of his nose in thought, trying to find the human being inside himself. _"Fine", _he half gasped and put the sandwich down.

Morgan looked up in shock for his persuasion had worked.
"Milord?"

"You have my permission to be absent from your duties until this assassin is brought to justice. I saw a good man die today, a friend no less, so I want you to do all in your power to bring her down, understand?" Balto said with vigor and hidden strength.

Morgan smiled under his helmet, he would get out of this place sooner than he had anticipated. He would bring down this assassin and with the Military Police's help, burn the supposed crime syndicate to the ground, then depending on the circumstances, he could return to the frontlines to face the titans in battle once more and see his friends. He would make Baron Mason proud again, and to a lesser extent Lord Balto. Adrenaline rushed through his body and he felt great relief at the lord's words.

He raised his metal clad fist and thumped it against the Wall Garrison badge that adorned his left breast above his heart, the clang of metal rang out and the sound sent shivers down Lord Balto's spine. He declared:

"Aye, sir. I shall not fail".

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><p>I hope you enjoyed the first chapter of Attack on Titan: Crack in the Wall. Please follow, review and favorite if you enjoyed it. If you want to learn more about Morgan's backstory and some upcoming characters, you can read Attack on Titan: Twin Crimson Rose but it's not necessary as this is a new story and everything relevant that happened previously is explained in this story, also the writing is far worse.<p>

Morgan can be seen on the thumbnail/front cover in his armor. After coming back from Japan I started drawing using potted inks and calligraphy pens so I can get a similar art style/feel to the SnK/AoT manga. If you want your own OC to be drawn by me, let me know. If I like it then I'll draw it and post it on my Deviantart, realism is preferred so no pink hair please! If I really like it then I might even implement the character in this story. Of course if they already exist then show me, I'm more than happy to see people's OCs.

The next chapter won't be out for a while after this one as I want to save story for when the next season of AoT is released sometime in the middle of 2016. Expect a surge in chapters when the anime drops. If you want to message me then I'm more than happy to talk about AoT and give help and advice on OCs, stories and what-not.

As a side note, this story runs parallel to the actual canon story as it never actually interferes with it directly, everything that happens avoids what happens in the anime so they never conflict even though they're simultaneous and in the same canon essentially. I write it in a way that this could be considered canon as it never impacts on the main storyline and I try to keep it as close to AoT realism as possible.

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><p>Character Profile: Morgan St Clare

Height: 176cm (Year 0845) 178cm (Year 0850, current time).

Weight: 72kg.

Age: 17 (At the Fall of Wall Maria, year 0845), 22 (At the Battle of Trost).

Hair color: Brown.

Eye color: Stone grey.

Grade/rank: Lieutenant.

Affiliation: Wall Garrison/ private security firm.

Race: Human.

Birthday: 21st September.

Friends: Hange Zoe, Quinn Mason, Cecilia Mathias, Wilhelm Adler (deceased after 57th Survey Corps Expedition), Mike Zacharias and Erwin Smith.

Enemies: Titans, Florence Bellerose (deceased as of Attack on Titan: Twin Crimson Rose chapter 19), Levi Ackerman.

Place of birth: Mitras.

Father: Captain St Clare, first name never disclosed.

Mother: Unknown.

Siblings: None.

Education: Mitras Royal Military Academy, finished 5th in trainee regiment.

Current residence: Lord Balto's castle.

Ancestral origin: largely unknown however his Celtic name and British surname points to the British Ilse. Why his family came from Britain to Germany/middle Europe is unknown.

Dream/goals: making the ultimate suit of armor, defeating Levi in a duel.

Likes: tinkering, guard duty, metal work, talking with Hange Zoe, rum, completing objectives on his own, free time, freelancing (he's currently not even being paid by the military as he's a unique case and is still technically part of a security firm even though the military thinks otherwise, Baron Mason funds him instead).

Dislikes: Levi, boring food, not being able to tinker, military protocol, accepting help, working as a team, losing to Hange Zoe in a debate, being given presents.

Biggest fears: being killed by his own war-hammer, Hange Zoe being killed, any close friend being killed, the St Clare Protocol failing, accepting a birthday present from Levi.

****SnK Official Character Statistics:****

Combat: 9/10 (8/10 after the loss of his arm during the 57th expedition).

Initiative: 6/10

Wits: 6/10

Teamwork: 4/10

Durability (special): 11/10

Average: 7/10 (using current combat skill of 8)

****Extra stats:****

3DMG skill: Originally 7/10, currently 0/10 as he is unable to use 3DMG after the loss of his hand.

Intelligence: 9/10

Passion: 5/10

Friendliness: 7/10

Popularity among soldiers: 7/10

Reliability: 8/10

Will power: 10/10

Physical strength: 8/10

Speed: 8/10 (without armor) 4/10 (with armor)

Humanity's Strongest Soldiers Rank: 20/100 (after Wilhelm Adler's death (ranked 17th)) originally 21/100.

Morgan has lower Wits and Teamwork stats than most other leaders, this is because Morgan tends to work alone as of 0845. He does not normally command a squad, rather he tends to operate independently due to his unique fighting style. When in titan territory he tends to work alongside other squads on his own but does not join them. When acting as a Field Commander, Morgan relies on his Intelligence and Combat Skill rather than his Wits or Teamwork to win a fight by planning far into the future instead of making up the next move at the last minute as is the case with most squad leaders, if there is a sudden change in the events around him that interferes with his predetermined plan, it can derail everything. The advantage of this is a better sense of when and where things shall take place and having greater time to plan a more effective strategy, the disadvantage is that making quick decisions in the heat of battle such as changing a squad's task on the spot is more difficult.

Morgan normally finds applying his above average intelligence to problem solving difficult for unknown reasons, however when in the vicinity of Hange Zoe he becomes able to apply it more effectively because of her incredible creativity and intelligence of her own, it is most likely due to inspiration.

His personality is an odd one, he can be silent for long periods of time or incredibly chatty if he is comfortable with the other person. He is aware of how harsh life is but naturally looks out for his friends, himself and humanity as a whole before the common man, he is not afraid to put people down if it hinders him. An example for this is during the Fall of Wall Maria, he kicked a desperate beggar in the face for trying to pickpocket him, the man was subsequently thrown out of Trost and fed to titans by the MP. Morgan is generally stoic in his outlook on life but certain things will push him to act, such as leaving the bodies of soldiers behind.

****Character Pros:**** Strong willed, adaptable, high tolerance, inquisitive, intelligent, sociable, normally well mannered and polite. Shows mutual respect to every soldier for their service. Overall a decent person.

****Character Cons:**** Often oblivious to events around him if he focuses on one thing too much including people's emotions. His mind drifts from time to time which is bad when he is working as a guard. Can be over-zealous at times. Sometimes over-methodical with his

orders. Generally prefers to work alone. When with Hange Zoe they become masters at pissing Levi off. Stoic, many petty things are beneath him but not in an arrogant manner, he simply doesn't care if the King is dying or the MP are corrupt, unless it's interesting, although his personal definition of petty is something that doesn't concern him. Secretly believes himself to be better than most soldiers if: he is more skilled than them, they have lesser achievements or if they have not earned his true respect, shown by his frequent references to the Humanity's Strongest Soldier Rank. Any soldier in the top 100 is greatly respected, even Levi.

****HTSA MK II: Horizontal Titan Slaying Armor Mark Two.****

(Includes Blast Hammer)

Weight: 45kg

Composition: High carbon steel, mild steel, brass, leather and numerous other materials.

Armor: Sallet Helm, chest plate, pauldrons, thigh plates, gauntlets, vambraces, shin guards/boots and tassets.

Movement: Locomotion aided by gas propulsion nozzles located at the ankles. Limited vertical (up and down) movement via wrist mounted grappling cable (Not suitable for use when moving in a fight).

****Pros:**** Allows for more effective titan fighting while on flat and featureless terrain. Can match up to a 4m class titan without a horse if assisted by gas propulsion and Blast Hammer (Morgan has slain two 15m class titans on foot due to plot conditions). Difficult to be consumed by anything smaller than a 10m class titan. Blast Hammer more effective at incapacitating a titan than a sword. Gas assisted propulsion jumping allows the user to free-run and break falls with jumps up to 3m high. Blast Hammer can break hardened titan skin and is theorized to be strong enough to kill the Armored Titan at its weak spot.

****Cons:**** Slower and less maneuverable compared to 3DMG. Normally requires a horse to combat larger titans. Requires two strikes to slay a titan as opposed to one unless the titan's nape is within reach of the Blast Hammer therefore slower but more reliable due to increased damage. Metal armor makes titan generated steam more intolerable. User is heavy due to armor's weight. Hammer explosives are very expensive due to being made from high explosive nitroglycerin instead of gunpowder.

The Blast Hammer is a converted war-hammer with two trigger mechanisms and clip recesses on its hammer head for attaching explosive nitroglycerin (originally gunpowder in the MKI) ignition caps. On contact the explosive blast is directed outwards by a curved powder pan and is then replaced. Morgan can carry about 20 caps at one time. Very effective at immobilizing titans, far more so than swords. Blast can cauterize wounds thus preventing regeneration. It is about 4 feet long and weighs about 10 kilograms. When fighting non-titans, an explosive is not used thus making it a war-hammer again.

The armor is thick enough to prevent musket rounds from penetrating.

Massively over-sized pauldrons used to prevent bisection from a titan clamping down over the wearer's torso.

The HTSA MKII is also known, mostly to the nobility, as the Armor of St Clare and is highly coveted by nobles, high ranking military personnel and the royal family. The St Clare Protocol is activated in the event that Morgan is killed in action because of the armor's value to both collectors and the military alike, the armor will be recovered and placed upon a stand within the king's palace until it is needed again. As Morgan St Clare is the only legal armiger of the armor (armor bearer), a new soldier would be selected by Darius Zackly to uphold the mantle of St Clare. Even though he is not a Knight, the government treats the Lieutenant in a similar manner because he is the only bearer of a fully functional and effective suit of armor. The only reason for this is because of the armor, not Morgan himself, in fact the government couldn't care less about him as he's just another soldier to them. The armor is what has value.

Fun Facts:

-Morgan's gas operated prosthetic hand is longer than his real opposite hand by about 3-4 inches. It is operated by gas pistons and steel wire tendons however, it's not actually a hand, rather it's a pincer. It involves similar technology to the 3DMG.

-Morgan obsesses over personal hygiene as much as Levi with cleaning.

-His grey eyes are actually incredibly deviant blue eyes.

-He is strong enough to snap a man's neck with a back hand whilst in his armour as it adds weight to his swing.

-His favorite colour is purple.

-He has left a man to starve to death after being mislead about his friend's kidnapping. The man was in fact innocent.

-Play fought against Levi Ackerman at the Survey Corps HQ alongside Hange Zoe but was beaten with a mop handle whilst in armor.

-One of the few human soldiers capable of actually putting up a fight against Levi.

-Morgan has a tendency to throw his helmet at unsuspecting trouble makers, like how an old man throws his slipper at kids on his lawn. The result is far worse though.

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><p>Visit my Deviantart: Duke-Statian for more pictures.<p>

End
file.